



## **CITY OF AUBURN**

### **Planning Commission – Staff Report**

**Meeting Date: February 1, 2011**

**Prepared by:** Adrienne Graham, Consulting Planner  
Reg Murray, Senior Planner

**ITEM NO.  
VI-A**

### **ITEM VI-A: SITE ACCESS DISCUSSION FOR THE BALTIMORE RAVINE SPECIFIC PLAN (BRSP) AND STUDY AREA PROJECT**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Auburn City Council considered the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan (BRSP) and Study Area Project (Project) at its meeting on January 13, 2011. The City Council passed a motion directing the Planning Commission to review two access alternatives for the BRSP project and to recommend one of the two alternatives for Council consideration. The first alternative is the Pacific Street Extension located on the west side of Auburn Folsom Road, opposite Pacific Street. The second alternative is also located on the west side of Auburn Folsom Road approximately 750' south of the Auburn Folsom Road/Pacific Street intersection.

#### **PURPOSE OF ITEM**

The purpose of this item is for the Planning Commission to provide direction to staff regarding the information needed by the Commission to compare the two access alternatives. Staff will then provide the requested information to the Commission at its February 15, 2011, meeting.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The issue of access for the BRSP Project has been addressed by the Auburn Planning Commission on several occasions as noted below:

- **December 15, 2009** – The Commission held a public hearing to overview the contents of the draft BRSP and to accept public comments on the proposed plan (see Tab G of the September 21, 2010 staff report binder). During the hearing, questions were raised by Commissioners and the public regarding the access routes proposed for the plan.
- **March 26, 2010** - The Planning Commission conducted a site tour of the BRSP project and surrounding areas, which included several access locations considered for the BRSP project. In response to the access issues and questions raised at the December 15, 2009 hearing, staff prepared a Memorandum to the Commission regarding Access Considerations for the BRSP dated March 26, 2010 (see Tab R of the September 21, 2010 staff report binder). The Commission also received a memo from the applicant engineer dated January 18, 2010 which provided a discussion on site access alternatives (see Tab I of the September 21, 2010 binder).
- **July 13, 2010** – The Planning Commission held a public hearing to take public comment on the Draft EIR prepared for the BRSP.

- **September 21, 2010** - The Planning Commission held a public hearing to review and take public comment on the BRSP Project and associated approvals. The Planning Commission staff report for the September 21<sup>st</sup> hearing (see binder) included additional information regarding site access issues. Included with the staff report was a memo from the applicant dated September 1, 2010 that provided supplemental information regarding site access issues (Tab S of the September 21, 2010 binder). During the public hearing, the Commission received comment on a number of different issues, including project access. Based on public comment, the Commission directed staff to provide additional information regarding access options to the project. The hearing was continued to November 16, 2010.
- **November 16, 2010** – The Planning Commission renewed their review of the BRSP project. The staff report included additional information regarding site access in response to the Planning Commission’s request at the September 21, 2010 hearing. The Planning Commission voted 4-0 to approve the BRSP EIR as well as the Large Lot Tentative Map for Plan Area 1, and recommended approval of the BRSP and other associated approvals to the City Council.
- **November 24, 2010** – The City received an appeal from Mark Smith of the BRSP EIR and the Large Lot Tentative Map for Plan Area 1.
- **January 13, 2010** – The Auburn City Council held a public hearing to consider the appeal submitted by Mark Smith, as well as to review and consider the BRSP project and associated project approvals. The Council staff report is provided as Attachment 1.

As noted above, the City Council denied the appeal and tasked the Planning Commission with reviewing two alternative points of access into the BRSP Project from Auburn Folsom Road, and to recommend one of the two alternatives. The first alternative is the Pacific Street Extension located on the west side of Auburn Folsom Road, opposite Pacific Street. The second alternative is also located on the west side of Auburn Folsom Road approximately 750’ south of the Auburn Folsom Road/Pacific Street intersection.

The Planning Commission hearings on February 1, 2011 and February 15, 2011 will only consider access alternatives for the BRSP. The City Council tabled discussion on the BRSP Project at their January 13, 2011 hearing until such time as the Planning Commission rendered its recommendation on the two access options identified above. The City Council will take up discussion on the access issues, and the project, at a later date following receipt of the Commission’s recommendation. Public Notice of the Council hearing will be provided once the Council hearing date has been determined.

## **DESCRIPTION OF ACCESS ALTERNATIVES UNDER REVIEW**

The two access alternatives that the City Council remanded back to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation were Alternatives #4 and #5 on the Site Access Alternatives map (see Attachment 2) presented with the March 26, 2010 access memorandum (Tab R of the September 21, 2010 staff report). Alternative #4 is located opposite Pacific Street, west of Auburn Folsom Road. Alternative #5 is also located on the west side of Auburn Folsom Road,

roughly 750' south of the Pacific Street intersection. Subsequent to Council's direction on January 13<sup>th</sup>, the applicant has provided a more detailed site access plan illustrating the two options (see Exhibit A). This plan has been refined to provide additional detail regarding topography, the road alignments, and grading. The two options are described briefly below, and the applicant's engineer has provided a memo (Attachment 6) further summarizing each option.

Pacific Street Extension (Alternative #4): With Alternative #4, Pacific Street would be extended from Auburn-Folsom Road west over the UP rail line with the construction of a new bridge. The alignment will continue southwest over property currently owned by the Auburn Recreation District, and then further to the southwest across property owned by the Sipe family to the northeast corner of the BRSP area. The overall length of this option from Auburn Folsom Road into the BRSP would be 4,900 feet long. In order to bridge the UPRR tracks immediately west of Auburn Folsom Road, a 22-foot high roadway embankment would be required. The bridge spanning the rails line would be approximately 250 feet long.

Rail line crossing south of Pacific Street: This option would provide a connection to Auburn-Folsom Road approximately 750-feet south of Pacific Street, near the existing Boardman canal. The total roadway length for this option would also be approximately 4,900 feet. Significant fill will be required to provide adequate clearance, resulting in roughly 12-foot tall embankments and a bridge span of approximately 100 feet. A 90-degree elbow would be required on the west side of the rail line to travel around the hill on ARD and Sipe property. The alignment would then move through the ravines and the eastern portion of the BRSP on the same alignment as the Pacific Street option above.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The purpose of this item is to identify the information that Staff is currently developing for the Commission's review of the two options, and to receive feedback regarding any additional information the Commission would like to receive to assist in its consideration of the access alternatives. Provided below is a summary of the information and issues that Staff is currently working on:

1. Topographic and slope maps – The two alignments have been superimposed on topographic maps to illustrate the different topographic constraints of each option. Exhibit A includes the proposed alignments with aerial topography; Exhibit B superimposes the alignments on a slope map of the area. Discussion regarding such issues as slopes, grading, design, and constraints affection both alternatives will be provided.
2. Fire Department review - The Fire Chief will provide emergency and safety analysis, identifying the criteria used for evaluating access for development projects and reviewing the proposed alignments for their implications to emergency access and emergency response times, including estimated response times from both the Sacramento and Maidu fire stations.
3. Police Department review – The Police Chief will provide information relating to police services.

4. Right-of-way acquisition and eminent domain – Both options would involve right of way acquisition from the Auburn Recreation District (ARD) and private property owner(s). The amount of land that would require acquisition under each alternative will be estimated. Potential issues associated with both options will be identified (e.g. the alignment for Alternative #4 may affect improvements on ARD property). Discussion will also be provided regarding eminent domain, since the City could be compelled to use eminent domain to acquire the property needed for the road right-of-way if the applicant is not successful in acquiring the needed property from the current owner.
5. Alignment, roadway, and bridge design information – Additional information will be provided regarding alignment options and implications (e.g. scope of work required within the UPRR right-of-way), roadway design (e.g. slope standards for roadway design), and bridge design.
6. Intersection improvements - Comparison of the likely improvements needed at the Auburn-Folsom Road intersections under the two access alternatives.
7. Infrastructure and services information – Staff will identify the infrastructure and services provided with each option, such as the water and storm drainage lines that would need to be incorporated and/or rerouted with each access, as well as services impacted by the proposed alignments (e.g. relocation of an existing 60kV power line for the Pacific Street extension).
8. Street lights – Due to the length of the road through an undeveloped area, staff will assess the need to provide street lighting.
9. Maintenance – The maintenance needs for both options will be provided.
10. Resource issues – Discussion will be provided about the implications of the alignment options on natural resources, cultural resources, and land use.
11. Costs - A general discussion of the relative costs of the access alternatives, including bridge construction, road construction, road maintenance, right-of-way acquisition and utilities.
12. CEQA implications – The need for additional CEQA analysis, if any, under either access alternative will be addressed.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

The Community Development Department is forwarding three pieces of correspondence addressed to the Planning Commission, including two letters from Sara Ann Ough (Attachments 3 & 4) and one email from applicant Stephen Des Jardins (Attachment 5). The correspondence is related to the BRSP project, but not to discussion of the two access alternatives. As noted above, the Planning Commission's review is limited to the access alternatives as directed by the City Council.

## **REQUESTED ACTION**

The Community Development Department requests that the Planning Commission direct staff to continue with the site access information as discussed above, and to include any additional information as requested by the Planning Commission for their comparison of the access alternatives.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. City Council Staff Report for January 13, 2011
2. Site Access Alternatives Map – January 10, 2010
3. Letter from Sara Ann Ough dated January 18, 2011
4. Letter from Sara Ann Ough dated January 22, 2011
5. Email from Applicant Stephen Des Jardins dated January 25, 2011
6. Site Access Summary Memo by Ubora Engineering dated January 27, 2011

## **EXHIBITS**

- A. Site Access Alternatives Map – January 27, 2011